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REMARKS

Claims 1-23 were presented for examination in the present application and remain pending upon entry of the instant amendment.

Applicants thank the Examiner for his time on December 5, 2005 to review the present application.

Claims 3-5 and 8 have been allowed. Claim 7 has been indicated as being allowable if amended into independent form. Claim 7 has been amended to include the elements of claims 1 and 6. Thus, claims 3-5 and 7-8 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 9-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

Claims 9, 10, and 17 have been amended to recite, in pertinent part, that the plurality of peripherals have "a plurality of different data types". Support for this amendment can be found at least at paragraph [0017].

It is respectfully submitted that claims 9, 10, and 17 as clarified by amendment meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. The Interview Summary, with respect to claim 9, acknowledged that this amendment obviates the rejection. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection to claims 9-23 are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, and 6 were finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,938,472 to Yuen et al. (Yuen).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claim 1 requires that the first end cap is "removably connected to" the first peripheral.

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The Office Action asserts that anything connected to ports 9 and 10 in Yuen can be considered a peripheral. See page 3, lines 8-10 of the final Office Action. It is respectfully submitted that the items connected to ports 9 and 10 are not removably connected to the end cap. Rather, these items are merely removably connected to the ports 9 and 10, not to endcap 6.

Independent claim 1 also recites that the tamper monitor detects "tampering with said first peripheral (emphasis added)." In contrast, the system of Yuen detects removal of the endcaps 6, but does not detect tampering with "peripheral devices" connected to ports 9 and 10.

The Office Action states that: "the Examiner does not disagree with applicant's assertion that the peripherals may be tampered with by hitting them with a hammer". Id. at page 5, lines 12-14. Since hitting the peripheral with a hammer does not remove the endcap 6, the Office Action itself acknowledges that the peripherals of Yuen can be tampered with, without removing endcaps 6 and, thus, without being detected.

Further, the Office Action states that: "the Examiner believes that the peripherals must be disconnected for the endcap to be removed". Id. at page 5, lines 19-20. Thus, the peripherals of Yuen, namely anything connected to ports 9 or 10, must be removed from the ports before removing the endcap. As such, the Office Action also acknowledges that peripherals of Yuen can be removed, without removing endcaps 6 and, thus, without being detected.

As such, the Office Action acknowledges that items connected to ports 9 or 10 of Yuen can be destroyed or removed without being detected. In contrast, claim 1 requires a tamper monitor that detects tampering with the first peripheral.

Claim 1 is therefore believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 2, 6, and 9 are also believed to be in condition for allowance for at least the reason that they

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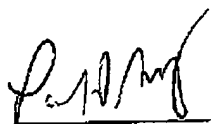
depend from allowable claim 1. According, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection to claims 1, 2, 6, and 9 are respectfully requested.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Such action is solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner feels that consultation with Applicants' attorney would be helpful in the advancement of the prosecution, the Examiner is invited to call the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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